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Weather Forecast

Today

High:101
Low:77

Saturday

High:103
Low:75

Sunday

High:100
Low:71

FRIDAY

Fort Riley

Post

Rodeo special for kids

More than 30 children participated in the special needs rodeo that took place on July 20 at the 4-H Center Rodeo Arena.

See Page 9

Operation Hickory Sting underway

By **Christie Vanover**
Staff Writer

“Live with, train with, fight with the Army,” are words that the 118th Air Support Operations Squadron lives by. The Air Force unit out of North Carolina deployed to Fort Riley July 21 to train with the Army’s 30th Enhanced Separate Brigade during Operation Hickory Sting.

The 118th ASOS will control A-10 fighters, designed for close air support of ground forces, and other Air Force aircraft for the joint services exercise.

“As a whole, our career field, both Active Duty and Guard, is less than 1,000, yet we support mechanized, light, Ranger and Special Forces units,” said Tech. Sgt. Craig Ramsey, public affairs officer and training noncommissioned officer in charge, 118th ASOS.

In addition to close air support, the Air Force plays a role in Fort Riley’s mobilization capabilities.

“Probably 50 percent of our deployments during the course of the year are run with Air Force aircraft,” said Dick Wollenberg, Fort Riley’s transportation officer. “Last year we deployed soldiers to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Cuba...all over the world.”

“For Hickory Sting, we have over 100 aircraft that are both due in and out, so about 16,000 personnel are going to get moved by air through Manhattan Regional Airport and into Forbes Field,” he added. “Small aircraft, the 737s and all the C-130s will come into Manhattan, where as larger

aircraft will go into Forbes Field.”

As both operations ran simultaneously this past weekend, approximately 15 aircraft flew in and out of Manhattan, with the remainder flying into Forbes Air Field in Topeka. Air National Guard units out of North Carolina and West Virginia flew the C-130s that brought numerous soldiers to Kansas.

“In addition to the people coming in on the aircraft, there also are about 200 commercial trucks that are coming in with various types of cargo, and there were 650 railcars that came in last week that we downloaded down at Camp Funston in preparation for these soldiers arrival,” said Wollenberg.

“It’s a pretty complicated move, but we run deployments out of Fort Riley all the time, and we run deployments out of Manhattan throughout the year. Over 50 percent of the aircraft that we deployed last year came out of Manhattan,” he explained.

Although mobilizations are routine for Fort Riley, Operation Hickory Sting is one of the largest in the post’s history. “We usually run one or two National Training Center deployments during the course of the year that we end up deploying approximately 3,000 soldiers for, but this one is about twice that size,” said Wollenberg.

Wollenberg has been impressed with the operation so far. “Everybody has cooperated. It’s run extremely well. I don’t think we could ask for anything better than what we’ve had.”

See page 5 for more stories on Operation Hickory Sting.



Airmen with the 118th Air Support Operations Squadron out of North Carolina arrive at the Manhattan Regional Airport for Fort Riley's Operation Hickory Sting. The North Carolina Air National Guard supported the mission by flying the airmen and other soldiers in on C-130s.

Troops head for their sleeping quarters at Camp Funston on July 16. The approximately 8,000 National Guard soldiers are on Fort Riley participating in Operation Hickory Sting.



Post/Cooke

Fort Riley cemetery nearly full

By **Jason Shepherd**
19th PAD

Gleaming white tombstones form perfect lines in the post cemetery, while flowers from family members lay scattered throughout.

An American flag flies in the middle, reminding everyone of the sacrifice these people made to their country.

More than 6,000 soldiers and family members are buried in the Fort Riley cemetery and it’s a part of Fort Riley history. Currently, less than two dozen plots are left.

Fort Riley officials are now looking for ways to add more land without breaking the law or Department of Defense policy that prohibits expansion or construction of new cemeteries on its installation, according to Lt. Col. Wesley Anderson, Public Works director for Fort Riley.

“In 1950 the Munitions Board prohibited the establishment of new post cemeteries and the expansion of current post cemeteries beyond their existing boundaries,” he said.

“I cannot speak for DoD, however, the federal government funds the Department of Veteran Affairs to construct and maintain cemeteries for the internment of deceased servicemen and veterans, not the Department of Defense.”

The Kansas Commission for Veteran’s Affairs has begun the process of screening sites to construct a new cemetery.

They are now looking at a site on the eastern boundary of Fort Riley overlooking the Manhattan Airport and Kansas Route 18.

If their studies find the site to be suitable, it would be transferred to the state for the construction of a veteran’s cemetery.

“This site has approximately

See Cemetery Page 6

Hamilton’s Own prepared for firefight

By **Jamie Bender**
Staff Writer

Approximately 550 soldiers from Fort Riley’s 1st Battalion, 4th Field Artillery, deployed Monday to assist with the wild- and fires in Oregon as part of Operation Warm Lake.

The fire began with a lightning trike just outside Unity, Ore., in

the Monument Wilderness on July 12.

As of Sunday, it was only 30 percent contained according to the National Interagency Fire Center’s website, and it was not currently a threat to the city of Unity or any outlying residences. No evacuations or advisories had been issued.

The soldiers leaving Fort Riley were issued their gear and

received instructional classes by the NIFC Sunday.

Gear issued to the soldiers included canteens, two pairs of Nomex fireproof pants, two shirts, a fire tent and new Army boots, said Maj. Joseph Coffman, operations officer, 1st Bn. 5th FA.

“The classes include the basics of fire management and firefighting, fire behavior and types, and acronyms and terms so that we

can speak the same language,” he added.

“We also used the NIFC website to research the area we will be at,” said Coffman. “We will be at about 3,000 feet at base camp and up to 7,000 feet where we’ll be fighting. That information helped us tailor our training.”

“We had the soldiers running up hills to get their lungs built up because the air is thinner up there,” he added.

The information from the NIFC website also helped the unit to put together a packing list. At that altitude, it will get cold at night, so we had the soldiers pack a set of long johns so they don’t freeze after coming down from fighting, said Coffman.

Dale Bitner, a national trainer with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife out of Boise, Idaho, said that NIFC is very appreciative of the assistance from Fort Riley.

“We know that with the military we have people who have a built in communications system. We have people who are physically much stronger than most, and safety is a prime concern for them. They fit everything that we need,” he said.

“We are heading into full scale fire season in the western states. We are looking at several months of heavy fighting. Having Fort



1st Finance Battalion set to inactivate

By **Jamie Bender**
Staff Writer

The 1st Finance Battalion conducted its inactivation ceremony on July 16 at Ware Parade Field. The battalion will officially inactivate in mid-September.

The ceremony began with red roses being presented to the wives of Lt. Col. Bruce Gubser, commander, 1st Finance Battalion, and Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Mailou. Single red roses were presented to Guber’s and Mailou’s daughters and a unit coin was given to Guber’s son.

After an invocation by Maj. Steven Nagler and the firing of the replica Revolutionary War era cannon, “Old Thunder,” the 937th Engineer Group commander, Col. Marc Hildenbrand, conducted the final inspection of the troops.

As the inactivation order was read, Gubser and Mailou cased the unit colors. The colors will be delivered to the Department of Military Heraldry to be held in the event the battalion is called upon, once again, to support the nation.

The 1st Finance Battalion is responsible for the financial readiness of the soldiers and family members of Fort Riley and Army personnel assigned to the U.S. Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

The battalion provides military pay support, Permanent Change of Station travel, separations and debt management. Alpha Detachment provides complete in and out processing support, while Bravo Detachment provides comprehensive military pay support once soldiers have in-processed.

In 1971, 1st Finance was established as a company to support the 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized). In 1987, the unit was expanded to become the 1st Finance Support Unit.

The Unit was then reorganized in 1992 to become the 1st Finance Battalion.

Hickory Sting soldiers train at Marshall Army Air Field

By Kevin Doheny
19th PAD

Accomplishing the mission takes more than just one soldier. It's a conglomerate of soldiers loing their individual tasks at one ime for a successful training mission.

During Operation Hickory



Post/Selmek

Mock protesters line up outside the gate at Camp Funston in an exercise scenario during Operation Hickory Sting.

Sting, a n exercise bringing about 8,000 Reserve and National Guard soldiers to Fort Riley, each individual becomes a part of one large mission, and each is an important part of it.

At the exercise area near Marshall Army Air Field, soldiers are doing their part to make sure their individual tasks are being done, so the accomplishment of the mission is made as smooth as possible.

"We are a small part of the exercise out here at Marshall Army Air Field," said Maj. Stanley Dunston, 449th Aviation Group. "We are out here doing our job in support of the mission as a whole."

At the site there are many different individual tasks going on. More than one section is doing their part so each other is taken care of. Also, during down time, individual Mission-Oriented Skill training is going on.

"Along with doing our mission, the soldiers are doing individual training tasks as well," said Dunston.

"We are doing a gamut of different things out here. We are getting a lot of different missions from higher headquarters, which entail sling loading, (medical evacuation) missions and downed pilot missions also. Also we get

into the play of civilians on the battle field, where the media comes out to the site and we try to accommodate them as much as possible without giving any information we are not supposed to."

To make sure the heat doesn't halt training, the medics are doing their part in making sure the training goes on without any major injuries.

"This is my first annual training since arriving from advanced individual training, and this is giving me a chance to gain experience to help out here at the site," said Pvt. Danielle Lewis, Co. E, 38th Medical Support Battalion from Indianapolis, Ind.

"We are the battalion aid station, so anyone who feels the need to seek treatment can come here, and with our knowledge and supplies we can help. We are treating the real world injuries as a priority over the situational ones."

Soldiers here are feeling upbeat and know by the time this operation is done they will have plenty of knowledge, which comes from good training.

"The morale of the troops out here is very high," Dunston said. "Since this is our rehearsal for the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., this gives us our

chance to work out the bugs and prepares us so we are ahead of the curve when we go to NTC next summer."

As Hickory Sting moves into full force, each of the individual

sections is doing their part to make this exercise work successfully.

The site at Marshall Army Air Field is staying busy with missions from the higher headquar-

ters and all the soldiers are chipping in to make the mission run smoothly.

Editors note: Tune into FOX 43 (CH 6) this Sunday at 9:30 a.m. for more on this story.



Post/Doheny

Pvt. Danielle Lewis, Company E, 38th MSB, Indianapolis, Ind., gives Sgt. Timothy Gallagher an IV during a training session on Monday as Staff Sgt. Jose Eisma looks on.

RCSD supports Operation Hickory Sting

By Christopher Selmek
19th PAD

Operation Hickory Sting is well underway, with the help of Fort Riley's Reserve Component Support Division.

Ted Irwin, chief of the Reserve Component Support Division, has been involved with the operation from the start, coordinating support efforts and providing installation utilities.

"I don't want it to sound like we're taking credit for this operation," said Irwin, "because it takes a lot of people and a lot of direction to come together for something like this. We just do most of the coordinating efforts."

Operation Hickory Sting is Fort Riley's mission rehearsal exercise for the 30th Enhanced Separate Brigade, North Carolina Army National Guard. More than 3,000 soldiers from 24 states traveled to Fort Riley to train over the

course of the next month.

The regular mission of the RCSD involves planning for units to come and train at Fort Riley. Operation Hickory Sting just happens to be a large, multi-unit, training operation.

"We're basically a one-stop shop for all national guard and reservists who come here to train," said Irwin.

Planning for Hickory Sting first began at the annual meeting held October 28 - 29, 2001. During this two-day conference, Irwin invited everyone that might be interested in training at this installation.

"(Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) comes out and trains on our obstacle courses maybe once a year," he said. "Not only that, but if a Boy Scout troop occasionally wants to come in and spend the night or eat in one of the mess halls, we help with that. It's all part of our recruiting mission.

If 100 boy scouts come in, then maybe someday ten of those will be recruits."

Currently, the main focus of Irwin's operation is in using all the property that he is signed for to help the soldiers, including crew quarters and dining facilities.

"We also work with Morale, Welfare and Recreation to make sure that they have an MWR day while they're training," he said.

Another big focus in Irwin's department is paperwork.

"If they eat a (hot meal) in the morning and at night and a (Meal Ready to Eat) in the afternoon, I make sure the paperwork goes where it needs to go and provide the civilian contracted cooks."

Though the planning phase of Hickory Sting is over with, now that the operation is in full swing, Irwin is not through with his involvement. Every day of the operation he attends an informa-

tional meeting out at the campsite.

The information discussed at this meeting allows Irwin to evaluate the success of the entire mission as well as the significant role he played in it. Overall, things seem to be going very well, Irwin said.

"So far the people at Fort Riley have been very supportive of us," said Lt. Col. Walter Ezzell, commander, 690th Maintenance Battalion out of North Carolina, "... the reserve component has been very cooperative. Considering the newness of this operation, it's going on pretty well."

"The North Carolina National Guard guys are really just a joy to work with, always stepping up to the plate and helping out with anything that we need," said Irwin.

Irwin said that he has enjoyed working on this project and looks forward to future endeavors of this nature.

"Everybody on Fort Riley is really involved in this," said Irwin. "Everyday I hear good things about people helping out. It's basically good customer service."

Editors note: Tune into FOX 43 (CH 6) this Sunday at 9:30 a.m. for more on this story.



Post/Selmek

An M1A1 Abrams tank rolls down the road from Camp Funston out to the Multi Purpose Range Complex for training during Operation Hickory Sting.

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Funeral details everyday part of Honor Guard soldiers duties

By Jason Shepherd
19th PAD

Six soldiers dressed in their dress green uniforms carry a casket draped with an American flag out of a hearse. They walk in step over to the clergyman and set the casket on the pyre. After that, even more soldiers go to the position of attention while the noncommissioned officer in charge instructs them to fire. At the same time, all seven soldiers fire their M-16A2 rifles. They do this a total of three times, giving the deceased a 21-gun salute. Then, a CD plays "Taps." After "Taps", the pallbearers take the flag off the casket and slowly fold it into a triangle. After carefully making sure the flag is folded cor-

rectly, someone ceremoniously hands it to the deceased's next kin. These are some of the tasks that soldiers on Fort Riley are expected to accomplish while on funeral detail. Fort Riley funeral details work about six days a week and do about 1,000 funerals a year. This equals almost four funerals a day. Fort Riley is one of the last military posts that give full honors to active personnel, retirees and veterans, according to Mike Hollibaugh, chief of casualty operations for Fort Riley. Most posts only give two soldiers up for funeral details while Fort Riley gives 15. These soldiers act as pallbearers and members of the firing party. Though Fort Riley

doesn't have a band, they do have a CD that plays "Taps," said Hollibaugh. "It is the appropriate way to honor the deceased's service to our country," he said. "They deserve it after their sacrifice to the military." Fort Riley covers funerals in Nebraska and Kansas, except for the most northeastern counties, which Fort Leavenworth does, added Hollibaugh. "We have seen a dramatic increase in funeral request over the past several years," he said. "While most other installations have resorted to using the modified setup, this command has consistently emphasized the importance of recognizing those who have served our country. This

places Fort Riley head and shoulders above all other installations. Although this does require our six red cycle teams to pull double details, as many as nine a day on occasions, the supporting units and their soldiers continually march on without fail while maintaining the unit responsibilities. This is a true testament to the dedication of Fort Riley soldiers." According to Field Manual 22-5, "Drill and Ceremonies," the funeral of soldiers has followed the same pattern for years, with the living paying their last respects to the dead. The first mourning proclaimed in America was on the death of Benjamin Franklin in 1791. Military funerals are divided into two classes, chapel service

with movement to a grave or a graveside service only. A full military funeral normally consists of a band, escort, colors, clergy, Hearse and pallbearers. For funerals off post, Fort Riley offers an NCO, six pallbearers and a firing party. These soldiers work with the survivor assistance officer to determine the sequence of the events. While at the church, the pallbearers carry the casket from the hearse into the chapel. The pallbearers have to be certain to carry the casket feet first and level at all times, according to the "Drill and Ceremony" manual. After the service is over, the pallbearers place the casket in the hearse and go to the cemetery. Once at the cemetery, the indi-

vidual in command should have already pre-positioned the firing party and bugler, if one is being used. Once the casket is moved from the hearse, the detail is brought to attention and present arms. Once the casket reaches the grave, order arms is given. At the grave, the pallbearers raise the flag from the casket and hold it in a horizontal position. Then the firing party gives the 21-gun salute, followed by "Taps." After that, the soldiers fold the flag for presentation to the family. The practice of firing three volleys over a grave originates as far back as the Roman Empire. In recent history, the three volleys announced that the burying was completed and the burial party was ready for battle again.

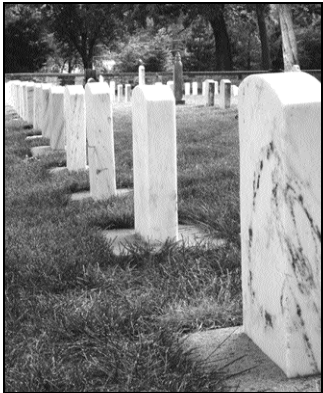
Cemetery continued from page 1

10 acres," Anderson said. "This is a good site) because cemetery operators prefer a southeast exposure, which this site has. It's not on a flood plain and it's on the edge of the installation boundary as required by (the Department of the Army) since the land is actually transferred from DA. "You do not want an island of and belonging to someone else in the middle of an installation." In years past, Fort Riley identified the grave shortage and implemented ways to add more plots. One section of road in the cemetery was removed which yielded 75 new plots. But, with the increase in deaths of soldiers from the World War II and Korean War generation, the cemetery is now using about seven plots a month

instead of the two or three it used in the past. This means the cemetery will run out of plots in the next three or four months. Since a new cemetery cannot be built on the installation, Fort Riley is forced to use all space within the existing stone walls of the cemetery. There is a portion of the cemetery that is not being used because the area may contain the "lost graves" of two 1850's cholera epidemics. The location of these graves is unknown since an 1890's prairie fire destroyed the wooden markers on the graves. "Fort Riley archeologists conducted an examination of historic archives and used non-ground disturbing investigative techniques to search for the graves during 2001," according

to Col. Philip Pope, garrison commander. "The results were inconclusive. We will continue to search for the graves as improved non-ground disturbing archeological investigation tools are developed." Pope also added that sometime this summer Fort Riley will use ground penetrating radar and soil conductivity measurement techniques to try to determine the locations of the graves. He said this area will continue to be unused unless technology gets to the point where it can determine what is in the area. "Fort Riley officials do not want to disturb any existing graves," Pope said. "The installation leadership is actively seeking the use of

proven technology and will continue to look for new techniques which provide the opportunity for the identification of addition space within the current, but almost full, cemetery." Officials also don't want to remove any more roads from the area because it will impact the ability of relatives to visit the cemetery and their deceased loved ones, Pope said. "Fort Riley will continue to search for ways to increase the capacity of the post cemetery," he said. "However, there is only so much we can do. The long-term solution is the proposed Kansas Veteran's Cemetery. The installation is assisting the Commission's efforts to complete their studies, however; it will take time to complete these studies and construction."



Post/Cooke

More than 6,000 soldiers and family members are buried in the Fort Riley cemetery, and it's a part of Fort Riley history. Currently, less than two dozen plots are left.

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